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PRINTS AND DRAWINGS FROM OXFORD COLLECTIONS

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THE MASTER E.S.

AND

THE 'ARS MORIENDI'

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.

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THE MASTER E.S.

AND

THE 'ARS MORIENDI'

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF

ENGRAVING

DURING THE XVTH CENTURY

WITH FACSIMILE REPRODUCTIONS OF
ENGRAVINGS IN THE UNIVERSITY GALLERIES AT OXFORD
AND IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

BY

(Sir) Henry LIONEL CUST, F.S.A.

M.A. TRIN. COLL. CAMB.

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THE MASTER E. S. AND THE 'ARS MORIENDI'

THE fifteenth century of the Christian era marks an important epoch in the history of human progress in the Western world. One by one the well-guarded trenches and bulwarks of mediaeval convention and exclusion yielded to the pressure of time and to the onset of a completely new set of ideas. Not only were many inventions of the greatest importance brought to pass or to perfection, but several useful practices, especially among the fine arts, were freed from a kind of serfdom to mere utility and developed on lines considerably divergent from those on which they had hitherto been exercised. The art of painting, for instance, found a more open and far more profitable field in the easel-picture and the portrait than it had before when practised as a mere adjunct to the decoration of buildings or the embellishment of books. The sister-art of engraving, in both its branches of relief and intaglio, was gradually elevated from a mere utilitarian service to an important rank among the pictorial arts. The art of engraving was practised by the human race even before it emerged from a semi-feral existence, and from the roughly incised implements of the cave-dwellers the progress of the art can be traced through its infancy to a state of adolescence in Chaldaea and Assyria, Egypt and India, Greece and Etruria, in fact throughout the civilized world until its maturity in the fifteenth century after Christ. It was in truth an important branch of the applied arts, and owed eventually its chief expression to the goldsmiths, metal-workers, and wood-carvers of the Middle Ages. Two things were required before the art of engraving could be liberated from its

chains and take its place as a means of pictorial expression. The substance on which the block or plate could be impressed required to be both cheap and durable, and capable of resisting the indispensable friction and pressure. The earlier forms of paper were too costly or brittle to endure this process, while parchment and vellum were articles of luxury. requiring careful preparation and ill-suited for rapid and repeated printing. A vehicle too was required to carry the pigment or colouring matter necessary for the transfer of the design from the block to the surface which was ready to receive it, a vehicle fluid enough to be easily spread and siccative enough to remain permanent when the impression had been made. The ink of the scribe was ill-suited for the requirements of the press, and the ordinary pigments of the painter were equally so.

Such a paper and such an ink were hardly forthcoming before the commencement of the fifteenth century, and, given their discovery, engraving was ready to make its appearance upon the scene as a new pictorial art, one moreover which was destined after the lapse of very few years to give birth to what has perhaps proved the most important invention ever made for the benefit of the human race, that of printing with movable types.

In the history of engraving the precedence is usually given by historians to wood-engraving, though this is an assumption rather due to an absence of evidence to the contrary, than to any positive proof that the art of copper-plate engraving was a subsequent invention. The earliest dates which appear on wood-engravings are 1418, which is affixed, not without some doubt as to its authenticity, to a coloured woodcut of 'The Madonna and Female Saints' now in the Print Room of the Royal Library at Brussels, and 1423, an undisputed date, which appears on a woodcut of 'St. Christopher,' pasted in a manuscript from the convent of Buxheim in Bavaria, lately in the Althorp Library and now in the Rylands Library at Manchester. The earliest date which appears on a copper-plate engraving is 1446, which is affixed to one of a series of small engravings of 'The Passion,' now in the Royal Print Room at Berlin. Early as these dates may seem, and rude as the execution may be, especially in the case of the woodcuts, they can be only taken as suggestive of something approximate to a fixed date for the invention of engraving. There is nothing in any one of these instances to prove that they were the very earliest production of the two respective branches of the art, or

that some of the other undated engravings which are closely related to them may not be quite as old, if not actually of an earlier date.

The historians of wood-engraving have been content hitherto with the above dates as a starting-point for their narrative. The early history of copper-plate engraving remained however under an unmerited cloud of obscurity. The legend was generally accepted, in spite of evidence existing to the contrary, that the art was accidentally discovered by one Maso Finiguerra, an artist-goldsmith at Florence, about 1452, and up to a very recent date the invention of the art has been credited to Italy. It is possible that Finiguerra may in the course of his work in niello, as Vasari narrates, have discovered the art so far as he and his companions in Italy were concerned. It can however be shown that engraving on copper was practised several years before in Germany and the Netherlands, and in all probability in Italy as well. In the earlier works on engraving, such as Heinecken's *Idée Générale d'une Collection Complette d'Estampes* (1771), Bartsch's *Le Peintre Graveur* (1803–1821), and Passavant's supplement to the same (1860–1864), a very large number of copper-plate engravings are catalogued as belonging to the early German or Netherlandish schools. They are all executed in a rough, dry and angular style, such as used at one time to be meant by the epithet 'Gothic.' Few bear a mark or signature by which the artist can be indicated or discovered, but the majority from internal evidence were capable of classification under certain distinct heads and dates. A very large number however remained without classification or identification of any sort, and even the learned researches of students like Willshire, Renouvier, Duchesne, and others threw but little light upon the subject. It was left to Professor Dr. Max Lehrs, the present Director of the Cabinet of Prints and Drawings in the Royal Museums at Dresden, to devote his energy and leisure, aided by unflagging industry and most careful and accurate powers of observation, to the examination and rearrangement of the copper-plate engravings of this date. In this he was largely assisted by the great advance shown in the arrangement of the engravings in the magnificent collections in the British Museum, at Berlin, Amsterdam, and elsewhere.

By dint of examining in person every known and accessible specimen in public and private collections throughout Europe, Dr. Lehrs has succeeded in elucidating and constructing an almost complete history of copper-plate engraving north of

the Alps during the fifteenth century. The result of his researches, now in course of publication, is likely to prove the final and standard work upon the subject. It is on them that the remarks in the following pages are based, Dr. Lehrs having generously placed the whole of his vast knowledge on this special subject at the service of the present writer.

The first important discovery which Dr. Lehrs may be said to have made is that among the engravers of the fifteenth century who preceded Albrecht Dürer, there are some who reveal themselves as original artists of great skill and merit, while others betray themselves as being mere mechanical copyists, their skill lying almost solely in the reproduction, or in all probability actual piracy, of the works of other artists. All the engravers of this date appear to have been workers in gold or other metals, and to have carried on this craft concurrently with that of engraving.

In the category of original artists appears an engraver who is known from his principal works as The Master of the Playing Cards (Meister der Spielkarten)[1]. Among other fruits of Dr. Lehrs' researches has been the discovery that the engravings of the early part of the fifteenth century, even the very earliest, had sufficient vogue to be used as models for the miniaturist to copy from. In the ornamental borders of an illuminated manuscript of Livy, now in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal at Paris, and in another manuscript, 'Liber Alexandri de Proeliis,' now in the library of St. Gall in Switzerland, Dr. Lehrs has been able to trace figures, directly copied from those in the set of playing-cards engraved on copper by the aforesaid engraver. Both these manuscripts are dated 1454, and it may be assumed that the engravings must by that time have had a wide circulation. A still earlier date can be discovered from the works of an almost contemporary engraver, known from his two principal works as The Master of the Gardens of Love (Meister der Liebesgärten), who, as it would appear from the costume of the figures in his engravings, was of Burgundian extraction. Two engravings by this master are evidently copies of engravings by The Master of the Playing Cards—a 'St. Anthony,' and the bordure of flowers to a 'Flight into Egypt,' the latter use of the original designs being curiously parallel to that of the miniaturists mentioned above. Now this engraver, who may or may not have been an original artist

[1] See Max Lehrs, *Die ältesten Deutschen Spielkarten* (Dresden, 1885).

at times, engraved a series of small prints illustrating 'The Passion,' of which eight only have survived[1].

This series of 'The Passion' appears to have been the original from which three series of *grisaille* miniature-paintings were taken, which are found in manuscripts of the period. In an undated Latin book of prayers in the Royal Library at Brussels twenty-two *grisaille* drawings appear, representing scenes from the Passion and the lives of the Saints, in which the eight known engravings by The Master of the Gardens of Love were copied. An undated Netherlandish book of prayers in the Plantin-Moretus Museum at Antwerp contains fourteen *grisaille* drawings of a similar nature. In a manuscript of 'Le Miroir de la Salvation Humaine,' also in the Royal Library at Brussels, a similar series of *grisaille* engravings occur, comprising a Passion series, in which the said eight engravings are copied, and a series of Saints, among which figures the St. Anthony of The Master of the Gardens of Love. Twice are found in this manuscript animals from the set of playing-cards engraved by The Master of the Playing Cards. This last manuscript was written for Philip, Duke of Burgundy, by Jean Miellot, and is dated 1448. It is evident therefore that not only the engravings of The Master of the Playing Cards but also those of The Master of the Gardens of Love enjoyed a considerable vogue and popularity previous to 1448. The date therefore of 1446 on the Renouvier Passion series at Berlin can only be accepted as the earliest known date which appears upon a copper-plate engraving, and not as any proof of its being the actual date of invention.

The eight prints of the Passion by The Master of the Gardens of Love were pasted in a small manuscript book of prayers of the fifteenth century, which has been broken up and dispersed. Fragments of this manuscript are in the collections of engravings in the German Museum at Nuremberg, the National Library at Paris, the Royal Library at Dresden, and elsewhere. The other prints pasted in the same manuscript are by different hands, the greater number being by the engraver known as The Master of St. Erasmus, owing to the fact that an original engraved plate by him with this subject exists in the German Museum at Nuremberg[2].

[1] See Max Lehrs, *Der Meister der Liebesgärten* (Dresden, 1893).

[2] See Max Lehrs, *Katalog der im Germanischen Museum befindlichen deutschen Kupferstiche des XV. Jahrhunderts* (Nürnberg, 1888).

The Master of St. Erasmus was an engraver (or perhaps a school of engravers) in a very rough manner, whose very numerous works do not show evidence of any originality as an artist. He may be presumed to have been a prolific producer of copies from engravings, and perhaps from miniature-paintings, all executed in such a size as to admit of being pasted into the books of prayers which were small enough to be carried in the hand. A large number of such prints, many of them still inserted on their original pages of manuscript, are to be seen in the collections at the British Museum and in the Grand-Ducal Library at Darmstadt. This engraver copied among others the engravings of The Master of the Playing Cards, The Master of the Gardens of Love, and the still more important engraver, with whom this essay has chiefly to deal, The Master E. S. or The Master of 1466.

The engraver, who is known sometimes by his initials E. S., which appear on a few engravings, sometimes by the date of 1466, which appears on others, is the first artist of real importance in the history of art who devoted his skill to engraving. In his hands the art of copper-plate engraving reached a high level, both in actual technical execution and in pictorial creation and sentiment. He did not however succeed in liberating it from the cramped and dry angularity which is so characteristic of Northern art at this date. There can be little doubt but that he was a working goldsmith, and practised in his craft, yet he shows a painter's eye in the new appearance of colour and relief, which he gives by shading in his engravings those portions of the composition which earlier engravers or miniature-painters had been content to leave open, to be completed by the addition of colour. In this The Master E. S. showed the way for the more advanced productions in 'black and white' of such famous artists as Martin Schongauer and Albrecht Dürer.

The art of The Master E. S. shows many traces of the influence of the famous painter of Bruges, Rogier Van der Weyden. The gentle suavity of the types combined with the lean angularity of the figures is characteristic of the great Fleming, but in the case of The Master E. S. they are enlivened by an unexpected vivacity and realism, which is sometimes carried even to audacity, and appears as the precursor of the subsequent realistic art of the Netherlands and the districts of Lower or Western Germany. Such a spirit is found in some of

the works of Martin Schongauer, and still more so in those of the great original 'dry-point' engraver who is known as The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet or of the 'Hausbuch.'

The subjects depicted by The Master E. S. in his engravings are of the most varied description, sacred and secular, ranging from the Bible and the Saints to scenes from every-day life, sometimes of a very free description, with heraldry, playing-cards, and designs for goldsmiths. Upwards of 320 distinct original engravings by The Master E. S. have been identified, and some forty more can be recognized as copies made by other engravers from originals by The Master E. S., of which no impressions are as yet known to exist.

Many attempts have been made to localize the home of this engraver, but it is difficult to prove anything more than that he seems to have belonged to the region of the Upper Rhine between Alsace and the Black Forest, probably somewhere about Freiburg or Breisach[1]. It is noteworthy that his great successor, Martin Schongauer, was a native of Colmar in Alsace and died at Breisach in 1491. It is not impossible, and it is at all events pleasing to conjecture, that Schongauer's early studies in the art of engraving were made under the superintendence of The Master E. S., with whose works he could hardly have failed to have been acquainted. It would appear from the most recent researches that the engraver known as The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet was one of a group of artists working at Mayence. As the Rhine was the great highway of all traffic at this date, it is not surprising to find the chief works in printing and engraving issuing from such important riverside towns as Breisach, Mayence, and Cologne. The engravers in one town can hardly have escaped familiarity with the works of their contemporaries in other Rhenish cities.

A feature common to the engravings of these three great artists is that their work is always entirely original. In no case can they be shown to have stooped to copy or even borrow the designs of another artist. Copies innumerable are known of the works of The Master E. S., as of those of Schongauer, but his designs with their good and their bad points are invariably his own. The works of The Master E. S. show also a gradual and steady progress both in technical skill and artistic conception. His earlier works are so much rougher and so immature

[1] See Max Lehrs, *Die Spielkarten des Meisters E. S.* (Intern. Chalcogr. Soc. Publications, 1891).

that they have been separated by some writers from his later works and classified as the work of a separate engraver, known as The Master of the Sibyl.

Among the earlier copyists or pirates of The Master E. S.'s engravings was The Master of St. Erasmus, whose copies cease at an early date in the career of The Master E. S. As The Master of St. Erasmus was also busied in copying the works of The Master of the Playing Cards and The Master of the Gardens of Love, it is almost safe to attribute the early work of The Master E. S. to a date contemporary with that of the two last-named engravers. It would appear that later on, when the engravings of The Master E. S. attained greater finish and excellence, the frequent piracies of them by such industrious goldsmith-engravers as Wenzel von Olmütz and Israhel van Meckenem caused The Master E. S. to protect himself by adding on his plates his initials and the date of the year in which the engraving was executed. The dates 1465, 1466, 1467, all occur on engravings by him, and as the engravings bearing these dates show him at the height of his skill, it can be assumed that his work and probably his life terminated about 1467, and when his powers were still in full maturity.

In the University Galleries at Oxford there is a remarkable and extremely valuable collection of early engravings, bequeathed to the Bodleian Library by Mr. Francis Douce, F.S.A.[1] The collection contains several important examples of the engravings by The Master E. S., some of great beauty and many of extreme rarity. Among them is a series of eleven small prints, measuring $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 3 inches (95 × 72 millimetres), illustrating the *Ars Moriendi*, or 'Art of Good or Evil Dying.' This series of engravings is complete at Oxford alone, and of only three prints in the series are other impressions known, in each case a single one and scattered as far apart as London, Berlin, and Schloss Wolfegg in South-west Bavaria[2].

The importance of this series was hardly recognized by any authority prior to Dr. Lehrs. Duchesne[3] and Renouvier[4] ascribed them rightly to The Master E. S. Bartsch did not know them, but Passavant saw them, and, confusing them with

[1] It is understood that these engravings will probably be rearranged under a proposal made by Mr. T. W. Jackson, Fellow and Tutor of Worcester College and one of the Visitors of the University Galleries, to whom the author is indebted for both assistance and advice in the preparation of this work.

[2] See Max Lehrs, *Der Künstler der Ars Moriendi und die wahre Erste Ausgabe derselben* (*Jahrbuch der Kgl. Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1890, Heft iii).

[3] *Voyage d'un Iconophile*, p. 364.

[4] *Histoire de l'origine et des progrès de la Gravure*, p. 136.

sets of copies at Cologne and Vienna, classed them all as the same thing under the general heading of 'School of The Master E. S.' Passavant's error, once published to the world in print, was followed by such well-known writers as Dutuit[1] and Willshire[2]. To any student of the works of The Master E. S. it is at once evident that these prints are from his hand, and, apart from internal evidence, the fact of their having been copied by The Master of St. Erasmus would point to their being among his earlier works.

The *Ars Moriendi*, or *Speculum Artis bene Moriendi*, the 'Art of Good or Evil Dying,' was a religious treatise, used with conspicuous force and authority by the Church during its long ascendency in the Middle Ages. At this date the keys of knowledge as of salvation were entirely in the hands of the Church, and the lay public, both high and low, were, generally speaking, ignorant and illiterate. One of the secrets of the great power exercised by the Church lay in its ability to represent the life of man as environed from the outset by legions of horrible and insidious demons, who beset his path throughout life at every stage up to his very last breath, and are eminently active and often triumphant when man's fortitude is undermined by sickness, suffering, and the prospect of dissolution. From such attacks and pitfalls only the continuous presence and protection of the Church could protect the hapless pilgrim through life. In aid of such a mission certain doctrines were adopted by the leaders of the Church, and inculcated in treatises drawn up by the most eminent divines of the day, such as the famous Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris. In this teaching the *Ars Moriendi*, linked as it was with the doctrine of eternal punishment, played a most important part. It was on his deathbed that a man was most amenable to advice, and in need of consolation to give him hope at the moment when his soul was about to depart into the unknown.

When pictorial art began to lend its aid to the minister of religion, it was of great service, for often, when the mind was too illiterate to understand or the

[1] *Manuel de l'Amateur d'Estampes*, vol. i. p. 28.

[2] *A Descriptive Catalogue of Early Prints in the British Museum*, by William Hughes Willshire, M.D. (London, 1879).

ear too feeble to comprehend the good doctrine which was being expounded at the bedside, the eye could follow in the print or illuminated page the subject to which the patient's thoughts were to be directed. According to the treatise for which the series of engravings by The Master E. S. was probably executed, there are five stages of danger, which the dying man must survive before the triumph of the Church is assured. These stages are—

I. Infidelity.
II. Despair.
III. Impatience.
IV. Vainglory.
V. Avarice.

The purport of the treatise is to reveal to the sufferer the temptations to which he will be subjected, and also the way in which he will be aided by Divine intervention to overcome them. Hence the prints, eleven in number, contain five pairs of subjects, representing the temptation and the protection afforded by angelic assistance, leading up to the general triumph of the Christian religion at the final moment of death. The eleven prints therefore represent—

I. A. *Temptatio Diaboli de Fide* (Versuchung im Glauben).
B. *Bona Inspiratio Angeli de Fide* (Ermuthigung im Glauben).
II. A. *Temptatio Diaboli de Desperatione* (Versuchung durch Verzweiflung).
B. *Bona Inspiratio Angeli contra Desperationem* (Trost gegen Verzweiflung).
III. A. *Temptatio Diaboli de Impatientia* (Versuchung durch Ungeduld).
B. *Bona Inspiratio Angeli de Patientia* (Trost gegen die Versuchung durch Ungeduld).
IV. A. *Temptatio Diaboli de Vana Gloria* (Versuchung durch Hoffahrt).
B. *Bona Inspiratio Angeli contra Vanam Gloriam* (Eingebung der Demuth gegen die Hoffahrt).
V. A. *Temptatio Diaboli de Avaritia* (Versuchung durch Geiz).
B. *Bona Inspiratio Angeli contra Avaritiam* (Eingebung der Freigebigkeit gegen den Geiz).

Leading up to No. VI, the final Triumph over all Temptations at the Hour of Death (Triumph über alle Versuchungen in der Todesstunde).

As stated before, the only complete set of these illustrations by The Master E. S. to the *Ars Moriendi* is that in the Douce Collection, now in the University Galleries at Oxford. A single example of No. I. A is in the royal Print Room at Berlin[1], one of I. B in the British Museum, and one of II. B in the remarkable collection preserved in the castle of Wolfegg-Waldsee in South-west Bavaria. No person, who is acquainted with the engravings of The Master E. S., could fail to recognize the *Ars Moriendi* engravings as the work of his hands. The thin dry figures, with their irregular and incorrect proportions, the stiff and angular contours of the drapery, the arrangement of the hair in both male and female figures, the grotesque antics of the demons, the homely vivacity of the domestic scenes, coupled with a certain pleasingness in the whole effect, are all characteristic of the Master E. S. The very evident faults to be discerned in the technique, perspective and composition all point to an early stage in his career before he had attained his full powers as an engraver.

It could not be likely that so important a series of engravings as the *Ars Moriendi*, illustrating a subject for which there must have been a frequent demand, should have escaped the notice of a copyist. The earliest engraver to lay hands upon them was The Master of St. Erasmus, who executed two sets of copies, one apparently copied directly from the originals by The Master E. S., the other copied from this set of copies. The copies by The Master of St. Erasmus are very rough and free renderings of the originals, containing divers omissions and alterations. The first set of copies is in reverse to the originals, showing the engraver to have been a mere mechanical engraver and not an artist; the second set, being copied in reverse from the first set of copies, brings the subjects round to the same positions as in the original series.

These sets of copies are almost as rare as the originals. Of the first series of copies only two sets are known, one in the British Museum[2], much disfigured by its having been coloured by hand, the other in the Hofbibliothek at

[1] Purchased at the Firmin-Didot sale in 1877 for 980 francs.

[2] Bought in 1845 at the Heywood-Bright sale; described by Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, i. 309. Transferred in 1892 from the Library to the Print Room.

Vienna[1]. Of the second series only one set is known, that in the Stadt-Archiv at Cologne[2].

Another set of copies from the original prints was executed at a later date by an engraver who is known by his initials of M. Z. This engraver has been sometimes classed with the primitive engravers of the fifteenth century, but it is clear from his works that he really belonged to the latter part of the sixteenth century, and worked sometimes in imitation of the archaic manner. Such an engraver was Matthes Zündt, but this engraver M. Z. appears to be distinct from him. He must also be carefully distinguished from the fifteenth-century engraver with the same initials, who is sometimes known as Martin Zäsinger. The copies by the engraver M. Z. are not uncommon, and they were subsequently published with a German text in 1623 by a bookseller named Peter König in Munich.

One of the results of the careful examination of the engravings executed in Germany during the fifteenth century, initiated by Dr. Lehrs and continued by Dr. Lippmann of Berlin and other independent experts, has been to show that many engravings on wood or on metal, which from their rude method of execution have been attributed to the infancy of the art, are really nothing more than unskilful copies of better engravings. It follows therefore that mere roughness of execution can no longer be taken as a criterion of antiquity. Among such engravings are some of the *Helgen*, or prints of Saints, and some of the so-called Schrotblätter, or prints in the *manière criblée*, which had been regarded as the *incunabula* of the art, whereas they are really nothing but copies from early copper-plate engravings which in many instances have not survived.

The same remark applies to the famous Block-books, so well known to bibliographers, and of such extreme importance in themselves, owing to their having led the way to the invention of printing with movable types. These Block-books have been allotted a special place in the early history of both bibliography and xylography, and have been treated with a deference, to which it

[1] Fully described by Friedrich von Bartsch, *Die Kupferstich-Sammlung der K. K. Hofbibliothek in Wien*, pp. 124–128, No. 1503 a–m. In 1853 this set was in the possession of the antiquary Fidelis Butsch at Augsburg.

[2] See *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, vols. x. p. 137, xi. pp. 51, 52, xiv. p. 110.

would appear, especially as regards their artistic value, that they are but partially entitled. They served as compendiums of moral and religious instruction, compiled in their well-known illustrative form as a handy one for conveying the precepts which they contained before the eyes of the sick or the illiterate, much in the same way as the frescoes, sculptures or painted windows did in the cathedral or the parish church. The best known of the Block-books are the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Canticum Canticorum*, the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, the *Speculum Artis bene Moriendi*, the *Ars Memorandi*, and others. In most cases it would appear that the designs were taken from drawings of an earlier date or from the illuminations in manuscripts.

In 1872 the Trustees of the British Museum acquired at the great Weigel sale in Leipzig a Block-book of the utmost rarity, for which the large sum of £1072 10*s.* was paid, exclusive of commission. This book has always excited great interest for its text and its illustrations, and in the British Museum Catalogue it is described as 'believed to be the first edition of this often-repeated work, by reason of the beauty and originality of the designs, and the sharpness of outline, which proves its impression to be an early one.' All that is known about its history is that it was purchased by Herr Weigel for a moderate price from a private owner at Cologne. In 1881 the Block-book of the *Ars Moriendi* was selected for reproduction by the Holbein Society, being published in lithographic facsimile from carefully drawn copies made by Mr. F. C. Price, and edited by Mr. W. Harry Rylands, with an Introduction by Mr. George Bullen, at that time Keeper of the Printed Books in the British Museum. The title of this work describes the Block-book as the *Ars Moriendi* (*Editio Princeps, circa* 1440). In the Introduction Mr. Bullen gives some valuable bibliographical information concerning the *Ars Moriendi* as a treatise, but with regard to the illustrations he has been content to adopt the views of Dr. Willshire, who had himself done little more than transcribe the statements, erroneous as will be seen, of other and earlier authorities.

The designs of the illustrations to the *Ars Moriendi* Block-book are very different from those in the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Canticum Canticorum*, and others. They show a great advance in composition and pictorial sentiment. No student of the engravings by The Master E. S. can fail to recognize in the designs of

the *Ars Moriendi* Block-book the style of this engraver, with the peculiar types and mannerisms which are so characteristic of his work.

At the time when this Block-book was acquired by the British Museum, the history of early copper-plate engraving had hardly been studied at all in England, and but imperfectly on the Continent. The works of The Master E. S. were not unknown nor their merit unrecognized, but their number, their originality, and their important position in the history of Art still remained unrevealed. Since that date the researches of Dr. Lehrs, aided by the immense assistance given by the advance in photographic reproduction, have rendered it possible to classify the works of this engraver, even without immediate access to the originals. In this way the individual characteristics of The Master E. S. have become as easy to discern as those of an Albrecht Dürer, a Rembrandt, a Claude Mellan, or a Whistler. It is also possible to trace the distinct progress in both artistic and technical skill throughout the immense series of engravings by The Master E. S. Duchesne, who had seen the *Ars Moriendi* engravings in the Douce Collection, recognized in the designs of the Block-book the hand of The Master E. S. The originality however of these latter designs was generally maintained. Passavant, who saw not only the Douce prints at Oxford but also the copies by The Master of St. Erasmus at Cologne and Vienna, not only mistook these three series for different impressions of the same set of engravings, attributing them to the school of The Master E. S., but pronounced them all to be copies from the well-known and highly-esteemed designs in the *Ars Moriendi* Block-book. In this he was followed by Willshire, Dutuit, and other experts, whose knowledge of the whole series of engravings seems to have been confined to some indifferent photographs, on a reduced scale, from six of the Oxford engravings, which happened to have been done for the British Museum as far back as 1871.

It was left to Dr. Lehrs to show that the much-vaunted designs of the *Ars Moriendi* Block-book are little more than enlarged copies from the set of engravings by The Master E. S., of which original engravings the only complete series at present known is in the University Galleries at Oxford.

A description of the designs in the prints by The Master E. S. will explain the subjects of the *Ars Moriendi* as a didactic treatise. The differences in the designs when copied by The Master of St. Erasmus and by the draughtsman

of the British Museum Block-book are immaterial so far as the meaning of the designs is concerned, but in some cases the errors or imperfections in the original designs of The Master E. S. have been corrected or improved by the later artists.

In the following descriptions the series referred to are denoted as—

(*a*) The prints of The Master E. S. in the Douce Collection at Oxford.

(*b*) The copies by The Master of St. Erasmus in the Print Room at the British Museum.

(*c*) The designs of the Block-book in the Library at the British Museum.

I. A. Temptacio Dyaboli de Fide (*Versuchung im Glauben*) [1].

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed, the head of which is directed towards the right. He is much emaciated, and his naked chest with one arm is seen above the bed-clothes. Four demons assail him. One is drawing away the sheet from behind his head. A second, on his right behind the bed, points to a group of learned men engaged in animated discussion, evidently heretics. A third, in the air in the left upper corner of the print, points downwards to a group of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba adoring idols. A fourth demon, on the right-hand side of the bed, points to two figures, of a woman, semi-nude, who holds a scourge in her left hand and a bundle of rods in her right, and a man who is represented in the act of cutting his throat with a knife. Behind the bed are seen figures of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary.

(*b*) The composition is the same, but in reverse, and the third demon in the air has been omitted.

(*c*) The composition is similar to (*a*), but to the second demon is attached a scroll with the words *fac sicut pagani* [2], to the third a scroll with the words *infernus factus est*, and to the fourth a scroll with *interficias te ipm.*

I. B. Bona Inspiracio Angeli de Fide (*Ermuthigung im Glauben*).

(*a*) The dying man lies on a bed, directed towards the right, with a wooden canopy to it. An angel stands in front of the bed in an attitude of exhortation.

[1] The Latin titles are taken from the Block-book; the German from Dr. Lehrs's descriptions.

[2] These inscriptions are cut in type similar to that used for the text of the Block-book.

Behind the bed stand God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, with Moses and a company of Saints with halos, numbering nineteen in all. The dove of the Holy Spirit rests on the canopy of the bed. On the ground are three demons in an attitude of despair.

(*b*) The same composition very roughly executed in reverse. The caterpillar-shaped demon in the foreground is omitted. Only seven distinct halos seen in the background.

(*c*) Similar to (*a*) : the angel holds a scroll with the words *sis firmus ĩ fide.* By the three demons on the floor are three scrolls with the words *fugiamus, Victi sumus, frustra laborauim*[9]. The dove of the Holy Spirit has been shifted from the right corner of the canopy to the left, and is barely recognizable. The number of halos in the background is twenty-one.

II. a. Temptacio Dyaboli de Desperacione (*Versuchung durch Verzweiflung*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed, the head of which is directed towards the right. His left arm rests upon the coverlet. He is tormented by six demons. They point to various figures of men and women denoting the sins of fornication, perjury, murder, robbery, &c., while one holds up a sheet of paper, on which may be supposed to be inscribed a list of the dying man's misdeeds.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse, but some alterations in the characters of the figures.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*), on an enlarged scale; the demons are accompanied by scrolls with the words *fornicatus es, periurus es, ecce pcc̃a tua, occidisti, auare uixisti.* A wooden head has been added to the bed.

II. b. Bona Inspiratio Angeli contra Desperationem (*Trost gegen Verzweiflung*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed towards the right, his arms under the bed-clothes. An angel stands in front of the bed pointing to various typical instances of repentant sinners—Mary Magdalene, St. Peter (whose emblem, the cock, is perched on the head of the bed), the Penitent Thief on the Cross, and the Conversion of St. Paul. Two defeated demons lie on the floor by or under the bed.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse, with a few alterations in the figures; St. Peter especially being made much younger in appearance.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*), with scrolls attached to the defeated demons inscribed *Nequaquâ desperes, Victoria michi nulla.*

III. a. Temptacio Dyaboli de Impaciencia (*Versuchung durch Ungeduld*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed towards the right, both arms disengaged above the bed-clothes; a demon with bat's wings is near the bed on the floor to the right. With his left foot the dying man is kicking away his medical attendant, while a woman (his wife?) stands in a deprecating attitude. In front of the bed is a maid-servant with food and drink, looking in astonishment at a table, which with its contents has been capsized, evidently by another kick of the dying man's foot.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*). By the women is a scroll with the inscription *Ecce q̃tam penã patiꝫ*, and by the demon one inscribed *q̃ bene decepi eum.*

III. b. Bona Inspiracio Angeli de Paciencia (*Trost gegen die Versuchung durch Ungeduld*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed towards the right, his hands in an attitude of prayer. An angel stands in front of his bed, round which are seen figures of four martyrs, St. Stephen, St. Catherine, St. Lawrence, and St. Barbara, with God the Father holding an arrow and a scourge, and Jesus Christ crowned with thorns and holding a scourge and a bundle of rods. A demon is seen creeping under the bed, and another is lying prostrate on the floor.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse.

(*c*) A similar composition to (*a*), scrolls accompanying the demons, with the words *sum captiuatus* and *labores amisi.*

IV. a. Temptacio Dyaboli de Vana Gloria (*Versuchung durch Hoffahrt*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed to the right, tormented by four demons, three of whom offer him crowns. Behind the bed stand God the Father with three little

children, typical of simplicity, and Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary as types of humility. Portions of the figures of three other Saints are seen behind them.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse, with no traces of the additional Saints and a more decorative head to the bed.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*). To the figure of God the Father is attached a scroll with the inscription *Tu es firmus in fide*, and to three of the four demons scrolls with *Gloriare, Coronã meruisti, Exaltate ipsum, Inpatiẽcia ꝑseuerasta.*

IV. b. Bona Inspiracio Angeli contra Vanam Gloriam (*Eingebung der Demuth gegen die Hoffahrt*).

(*a*) The dying man lies on a bed to the right, his arms under the bed-clothes: three angels attend him, one of whom holds up a blank sheet of paper to show that his sins have been wiped out. In the sky behind float figures of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary with the dove of the Holy Spirit, and on the left stands St. Anthony the Hermit, as a type of humility. Two demons lie defeated on the floor, and in the lower corner on the right are seen the jaws of hell, in which three figures are being engulfed, including one of a monk and a woman in an embrace.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse, but the figures of the monk and woman have been greatly modified.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*), but the angel behind the bed holds, instead of the empty paper, a scroll inscribed *Sis humilis.* By the prostrate demon in front is a scroll inscribed *Victus sum*, and by the jaws of hell one inscribed *Superbos punio.*

V. a. Temptacio Dyaboli de Avaricia (*Versuchung durch Geiz*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed to the right, both his arms under the bed-clothes. He is tormented by three demons, one of whom points to a group of people representing his family and relatives, and the other two to his house, which occupies the lower part of the print, showing a man leading a mule int a stable, and a cellar stored with barrels, three of which are seen.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse; five barrels are seen in the cellar.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*), but not only are five barrels seen in the cellar, but also a man drawing wine from one of them. Attached to the demons are scrolls inscribed *Prouideas amicis* and *Intende thesauro.*

V. B. Bona Inspiracio Angeli contra Avariciam (*Eingebung der Freigebigkeit gegen den Geiz*).

(*a*) The dying man lies in bed to the right, exhorted by an angel. Behind the head of the bed are seen the crucified Saviour and the Virgin Mary, and in the background stands God the Father (?) as the Good Shepherd between a flock of sheep and a group of female Saints. In the foreground to the left an angel is enveloping a man and woman in a cloak, and on the floor to the right is seated a demon in an attitude of despair.

(*b*) The same composition in reverse, very roughly rendered.

(*c*) The same composition as (*a*). The angel by the bedside has a scroll inscribed *Non sis auarus*, and the other angel one inscribed *Ne intendas amicis.* The demon on the floor holds a scroll inscribed *Quid faciam.*

VI. The last print represents the final Triumph over all Temptations at the Hour of Death (*Triumph über alle Versuchungen in der Todesstunde*).

(*a*) The composition is a very crowded one. The dying man lies in bed to the right, holding a taper in his *left* hand, which is crossed over the right. A monk is placing the taper in his hand. His soul in the shape of a child issues from his mouth and is received by a company of angels. In the background on the left is seen the crucified Saviour with St. John the Evangelist standing on the *right* of the Cross and the Virgin Mary on the *left* of it. Behind St. John are seen portions of four Saints, and behind the Virgin Mary St. Mary Magdalene, St. Paul, and portions of eight other Saints. Six demons stand in angry derision at the foot of the bed.

(*b*) The same composition, but in reverse, thus correcting the faults of (*a*), in which the taper is held in the dying man's wrong hand, the Virgin and St. John stand on the wrong side of the Cross, and the Redeemer's head leans to the left instead of to the right shoulder, as accepted by tradition.

(*c*) The same composition as (*b*), with which the draughtsman of the Block-book would seem to have been acquainted, for he has followed the engraver of (*b*) in correcting the errors into which The Master E. S. had been betrayed. Five scrolls are attached to the demons, inscribed *Heu insanio, Confusi sumus, Furore consumor, Animã amisimus, Spes nobis nulla.*

It will be noticed that in the last subject especially certain mistakes have been made by The Master E. S., which have been rectified by the draughtsman of the Block-book, but at the expense of reversing the whole composition, thus destroying the symmetry of the position of the dying man throughout the scenes. As Dr. Lehrs has pointed out[1], such defects are not unfrequent among the earlier works of The Master E. S., and those in the *Ars Moriendi*, together with the imperfections of the technique, help to prove that these engravings belong to his earlier work. The Master of St. Erasmus copied the whole series simply in reverse. The sixteenth-century engraver M. Z. copied the whole series by The Master E. S. in the same direction as the originals, and all the mistakes of the originals are repeated in this last version.

Another noteworthy difference in the Block-book series is the addition of the scrolls with the inscriptions in large cursive letters described above. When the crowded and cramped designs of The Master E. S. were copied on a larger scale the increased spaces left room for the introduction of these scrolls, which are introduced without much regard for the beauty of the composition, but serve to elucidate the meaning of the designs, a meaning which is not always quite evident at first sight. In IV. B (*c*) especially the substitution of the scroll for the empty paper points to an alteration by a later hand.

All subsequent wood-cut copies have been taken from the Block-book[2], and through constant translation by various hands some of the designs in the later copies are hardly to be recognized as the same.

To the eye of the ordinary observer the designs of the Block-book, in their enlarged and more intelligible form, may appear to be more pleasing and attractive and of greater artistic merit than the cramped and crowded compositions of the

[1] Lehrs, *Der Künstler der Ars Moriendi*, &c.

[2] See Dutuit, *Manuel de l'Amateur d'Estampes*, vol. i., for a list of editions of the *Ars Moriendi*, some of which are there stated to be earlier than the British Museum Block-book.

copper-plate engravings. It is impossible however for any student of German engraving in the fifteenth century to fail to recognize in the designs of the Block-book the style of The Master E. S. Should there be any hesitation as to determining the priority of the Block-book or the Oxford series of copper-plate engravings, the only alternative to the conclusion already arrived at would be to attribute the wood-cuts themselves to The Master E. S., in which case the anomaly would be presented of this great and original artist, among whose numerous engravings no copy of any other artist's work is known, having for one occasion only laid down his graver for the knife, and then translated his own designs for the more easily printed and more popular language of wood-engraving into the more difficult and obscure version on copper. Such a supposition can hardly be entertained, and there is little reason for not accepting the conclusion of Dr. Lehrs, that the unique series of engravings in the Douce Collection at Oxford are the real *editio princeps* of the famous *Ars Moriendi*. The dates fixed by conjecture for the publication of the Block-book, either 1440 or 1451, approximate to the date in the career of The Master E. S. at which it would appear from their *technique* that the series of copper-plate illustrations to the *Ars Moriendi* were executed.

'ARS MORIENDI'

FACSIMILES OF ENGRAVINGS

IN THE

UNIVERSITY GALLERIES AT OXFORD

AND IN

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

I. A

I. B

II. A

II. B

ORIGINAL PRINTS BY THE MASTER E. S.

[*In the University Galleries, Oxford*]

III. A

III. B

IV. A

IV. B

ORIGINAL PRINTS BY THE MASTER E. S.

[*In the University Galleries, Oxford*]

V. A

V. B

VI

ORIGINAL PRINTS BY THE MASTER E. S.

[*In the University Galleries, Oxford*]

I. A

I. B

II. A

II. B

COPIES BY THE MASTER OF ST. ERASMUS

[*In the Print-Room of the British Museum*, 1892, 12. 1 (1–12)]

III. A

III. B

IV. A

IV. B

COPIES BY THE MASTER OF ST. ERASMUS

[*In the Print-Room of the British Museum*, 1892, 12. 1 (1–12)]

V. A

V. B

VI

COPIES BY THE MASTER OF ST. ERASMUS

[*In the Print-Room of the British Museum*, 1892, 12. 1 (1–12)]

'ARS MORIENDI' BLOCK-BOOK

[*In the Library of the British Museum, c.* 21. *d.* 34]

Quamuis secundum philosophū Mors sit horribilissima
omniū terribiliū. mors corporis sit terribilissima.
Quia tamen animę nullatenus est comparanda
Teste augustino qui ait Nullus est dolor in comparatione
animę omnia corpora. Teste etiam Bernardo qui
dicit Latius iste inimicus ad omnes animę penetrare
non potest. Mors ergo animę tanto est horribilior atq;
detestabilior. quanto anima corpore est nobilior. atq; pretiosior
Cum ergo anima tanto pro salute eterna et diabolus
pro morte ipsius eterna. hominē in extremis multum tentet.
Maxime tempestatibus subiiciet. Ideo summe necessarium
est. ut homo animę sue prouideat ne morte illa pereat.
Ad qđ. mo. sunt expedientes est uno quilibet certum
bene moriendi. de qua est primo intendo. frequenter per oculos habeat. atq; extremā tribulationē mortis sue meditetur
quia ut ait Gregorius. Valde se solicitat in bono opere
qui sepe cogitat de extremo fine. Nam si futurū malum
recte considerat. facilius tolerari potest. Mortis illud.
futura si presentia sunt. leuius tolleratur. Sed maxime
animus se ad mortem disponit temptatiue. ea q quilibet
diuersis se victum existimet. ueq; videat se tam ante mortem
futurū. qđ multi ad diabolum eterna pena tenentur. qui spes
sibi vendidere. Nemo igitur sperans nescit. qđ spes sit mortalis
Ergo nullatenus mortem detur. spes anima confortans sanctus
consequende. Nam secundū canonicorum sanctiones. spes
talem falsam consolationē. et fictam sanitatis confidentiam
certam iudicium ut homo de anima sua. Iuste anima ergo tribulatur
nisi mortis ad ea. que ueresimus ad salutem requisitum.
Omnis ut credat sancta ecclesia nos credere debere. Ideo
quoq; in fide xpi. et ecclesie mortem ut debemus.

Secundo vtrum quis sciat se deū grauiter offendisse et inde doleat. Tertio vtrum ponat se veraciter emendare si hoc meruit et vnicuique amplius peccare. Quarto vt fateatur sua offensionibus ꝓximis deum et remittat ꝑata ab his quos ipse offendit. Quinto vt ablata restituat. Sexto vt credat pro se mortuū esse xp̄m. et q̄ alter saluari non potest. nisi p̄ meritū passionis xp̄i. de quo agat deo gratias cuiusuis valet. Ad que si bono corde respondeat. Cognoscit eū q̄ sit deus misericors saluandor. Deinde studiose tradatur ad dign̄ vsum sacramentorū ecclesie. Primo vt p̄ veram contritionem cum integra sancte confessionē. alias enim ecclie sacramenta deo ꝓfanando recipiendo. Quisquis vero de p̄missis ab alio interrogatus vel interrogatus nō fuit. semp̄ interrogetur. considerando si sit dispositus vt p̄fertur. Quia autem sic dispositus est. se totū passioni xp̄i cōmittat. contritus eam recolendo atq; meditando. quia per hoc omnes temptationes diaboli. et infidelitas maxime superantur. Vnde notandum q̄ multi grauiores habent temptationes. q̄ vnquam prius habuerunt. Et sunt quidam vt postea patebit. Contra quas angelus suggerit eis quinq; bonas vsitationes. Sed vt omnibus illa vtilior sit fructuosa. et minus ab ipsius speculatione secludatur. sed inde vtcunq; salubriter discat tam iustus tantum ꝓfecto desiderantibus q̄ peccatoribus lecto et intento simul deseruientibus cum tremendum oculis obiectur. Hic duo se mutuo correspondentes habent se tanq̄ speculum in quo preterita et futura tanq̄ presencia speculantur. Quia ergo bene mori velit. ille cum sequentibus diligenter consideret.

Tentacio dyabolo de fide

Ex quo fides. est totius salutis fundamentum. et sine ea nulla omnino potest esse salus teste augustino qui ait fides est bonorum omnium fundamentum initium et humane salutis inicium. Et bernardo dicente. Fides est humane salutis inicium sine hac nemo ad filiorum dei numerum potest pervenire. sine hac omnis labor hominis est vacuus. Ideo dyabolus totius humane gens numerus totis viribus hominē in extrema miseria. ab illa totaliter auertere utinam vel saltem ad dubitandū in ea. ppm inducere laborat dicens. tu nisi in magno stas errore. non est sicut credis vel sicut predicatur. Infirmus fractus est. quicquid homo agat. licet aliquem vel seipm occidat. cum indiscreta pena sicut aliqui fecerūt. vel ydola adorat. ut reges paganor. et plures pagani fecerunt. nomen unum deum est. quia nullus inuenitur. dicens tibi veritatem. et sic fides tua nichil est. Hys et similibus. dyabolus maxime laborat. ut hominem in extremis agentem a fide auertat. quia bene scit. Si fundamentum ruat. omnia superedificata necessario ruent.

Secundum tamen q dyabolus in nulla temptatione. hominem cogere potest. nec etiam aliquo modo prevalere ut sibi consentiat. q diuinum non habuerit. nisi sponte voluerit consentire. quod certe sup omnia cauendum est. Unde apostolus. fidelis deus qui non patietur vos temptari sup id qđ potestis. sed facit cum temptatione proventum ut possitis sustinere.

Sic finimus ista
Fugamus
Pellimus
Fruem labore nostro

Bona inspiratio angeli de fide

Contra primam temptationem dyaboli dat angelus bonā inspirationem dicens. O homo ne credas pestiferis suggestionibus dyaboli cum ipse sit mendax. Nam mendacendo protoplastes deceptus nec aliquo modo turbide dubitare licuit seu vel minimum comprehendere non valeas. quia si comprehendere posses. nullatenus esset meritoria. vnde illud gregorii. Fides non habet meritū cui humana ratio prebet experimentum. Sed memento verba sancti petri. Salutem animarum pauli ad hebreos xi. dicentis Sine fide impossibile est placere deo. Et johannis tertio. Qui non credit iam iudicatus est. Et bernardi dicentis. Fides est primo gentita inter virtutes. Et veri. Beatus hinc vsque perpetuo fidem xpi. & martyrem xpi. Sanctificare etiam fidem antiquorum fidelium. abrahe. ysaac. et iacob. et quorundam gentilium. Similiter rahab meretricis. et similium. similiter fidem apostolorum nec non innumerabilium martirum confessorum atque virginum. Nam per fidem omnes antiqui et moderni placuerunt. Per fidem sanctus petrus super aquas ambulavit. Sanctus johannes venenum sibi propinatum sine vlo cunctatione bibit. montes saltim. crauit alere audere. per fidem adiuvati sunt. Et ideo fides adeo merito benedicta. Propterea viriliter debes resistere dyabolo. et firmiter credere omnia mandata ecclesie. quia sancta ecclesia errare non potest. cum a spiritu sancto regatur...

Nota quarto inferimus quare se temptari contra fidem. cogitet primo. quia necessaria est fides. quia sine ea nullus salvari potest. Secundo cogitet. quia utilis est. quia potest omnia ducere ad vitam. Omnia possibilia sunt credenti. Et iterum. Quod cunque orantes petierint credite quia accipietis. Et sic inferimus secunda. quia gratia dyaboli resistit. Quare etiam bonum est. vt simbolum fidei circa eucharistiam alta voce dicatur pluries cum repetatur. ut per hoc infirmus ad fidei constantiam animetur. et demones qui illud audire abhorrent. abigantur.

Pauperes
Ex vitia
Diuiti
Diuitie

Tentacio dyaboli de desperacione

Secundo dyabolus tentat hominem infirmum p desperacionem que est contra spem atq confidenciam quam homo debet habere in deum. Cum ergo infirmus doloribus cruciatur i corpore tūc dyabolus dolorem dolori superadit obiciendo sibi peccata sua presertim non confessa ut eum sic desperacione inducat dicens. Miser vide peccata tua que tanta sunt ut nūq venam acquirere possis ante ut dicere possis deum cayri. Maior est mea nequicia q̄ ut veniam merear. Sicce quomodo de precepta tua sic tepescis es nam deum super omnia non dilexisti. hominibus iniuria nocumenta non dimisisti. et tamen bene scis q̄ nullus potest saluari nisi seruauerit mandata dei quia dñs dicit. Si vis ad vitam ingredi serua mandata. sed superbe. auare. luxuriose. gulose. iracunde. inuide. accidiose. verisimiliter predicari audisti. q̄ peccatum mortale homo potest dampnari. Insuper septem opa misericordie non implesti. que tamen dominus precepit inquiretur extremo die. ut patet de reprobis. Ite in ignem eternum. Nam cibum et non dedisti michi potum non dedisti. Et ideo iacobus dicit. Iudicium sine misericordia erit illi. qui misericordiam non fecit. Insuper terram. Videres etiam q̄ plures sancte et die in lege dei vigilant tam in laborantes. qui tamen nullatenus de salute sua presumere audent. quia nullus scit an odio vel amore dignus est. et ergo nulla spes salutis tibi relinquitur. Per istum et similia inducit hominem ad desperacionem. que super omnia mala est vitanda. cum misericordiam dei offendat. que sola nos saluat. Tale propheta. Misericordie domini quia non consumpti sumus. Et augustinus dicit. Nullus quisq̄ positus in peccato si de venia vera desperauerit misericordiam fundentis perdit michi enim sic deum offendit q̄ desperando

II. в

Bona ignatio angli contra desperationē

Contra sodam tēptationē dyaboli docet angla bona ignatiouē
dicens o homo quam desperas cū tot latrocinia et
homicidia p̄ctalles quot cōmittis manus gutte et arcue. cū tu solꝰ
totus mundi p̄ctā quātilles. Etiam si de eisdem mīp̄ p̄tis pe
nitentiā egisses aut ea confessus fuisses. nec etiam uno do ad con
structiōē ea tā multitudē habere. nec hominis desperare nō debes.
quia in tali casu sufficit sola contritio cordis. Dicit p̄s. cor contri
tū et humiliatū deus nō despicies. sit exemplum aut. Quamcūq; ho
rā peccator ingemuerit. salvus erit. Unde Bernardus ait. Maior
est dei pietas q̄ quas iniquitas. sit. augustinus. plus potest
deus unicuiq; hoīm peccare. In casu etiā quo tibi constaret.
q; de numero damnatorū esses. nec quā adhuc desperare debes
eo q; p desperationē nichil aliud agitur nisi q; p eam pissimus
deus multo magis offenditur. et alia p̄ta fortius aggravant.
pena quoq; eterna usq; in infinitū augmentatur. Xp̄us etiā pro
peccatoribus crucifixus est. et nō pro iustis ut ipsemet testatur de
cens. Nō veni vocare iustos sed peccatores. Exemplū habes in petro
xp̄m negante. paulo antiq; persequente. matheo et zacheo publicanis.
maria magdalena peccatrice. in muliere de ph̄ia in adultio. In latrone
iuxta xp̄m in cruce pendente. maria egyptiaca &c

Nō q; aliquis nos tentare debeat desperationē cogitet q;
ea est peior et damnabilior oībus p̄tis. et q; nūquam debet
admitti. propter quecūq; etiam p̄ta. Dicit ut dicit augustinus.
Plus petrus iudas desperando q; iudei crucifigendo xp̄m.
Sed nō negatet q; vitia et uicia in se spes. quia secūdm eius nimiū
est salutis nāe anchora. vite firmamentū. cui innitens quo
libet ad celū. sit iter nullusq; ē celum qui de ea penitet etiā quecūq; p̄ta

Cur plum pecu patr
Comedam eum

Tentatus a dyabolo de ꝑsancia

Certo dyabolus tentat hoīm mentem ꝑ ꝑsanciam que oritur ex magna ībecillitate ducens sue tu patrie ihū dolorē grauissimū qui est ītollerabilis omī creature et tibi peccatus ītuitus nec ecclām tuus exigentibus deuenitus dolor tantus nūq̄ deberet causari Nam scriptū est Tu pecus benignoe ītemptatio facienda tibi non qō multū grauet nullus tibi corripiatur qō contra omnē racionem fieri nemo dubitat licet autem anima ore compatiantur tamē maxime ꝓpter bona relinquenda tuam mortem mente debderant. anima quidem corpore exuta uix ꝓ primus diei spacīū ꝓ omī substancia relicta corpus tuum hospitari volunt Hos et similibus adhuc pacientem que est contra caritatē qua teneamur deū diligere sup omnia uitatur dyabolus hominē ducere vt sic merita sua ꝑdat Nota q̄ morientis maximus dolor corporis auferit hys precipue qui non morte naturali que raro est sicut docet experiencia manifesta sed frequenter ex accidentibus puta febre vel apostemate vel alia infirmitate grauia et affluentia atq̄ longa dissoluūtur que quidem infirmantes plerisq̄ et pene ꝑ ad mortem mentis positos et ītuite morientes a deo reddit impacientes atq̄ murmurantes vt plerūq̄ ex nimio dolore in impacientia cadentes atq̄ insensati videantur sicut sepe visum est in multis Ex quo vere coligat q̄ tales vtiq̄ in vera dilectione caritatis esse Ihesu Christo qui ait. Si quis cum dolore egritudinem vel mortem patitur seu accipit signum est q̄ sufficienter deum non diligat Et paulus ait. Caritas patiens et benigna est :—

III. в

Bona inspiratio angeli de patientia

Contra tertiam temptationē dyaboli dat angelus bonā inspirationē dicens. Homo auerte ab ipatia animū tuū p quā dyabolus suis mortiferis suggestionibus inchoat aliquid q̄ animae tuae detrimentum querit, nā p ipatiam et uincitur anima pdūtur. Sicut p patientiā possidetur. teste Gregorio qui ait. Regnū celorū nullus murmurans accipit. Te igitur inmurmurans quē respectū meritor tuorū latus est. non tedeat cum ipa ante mortem sit quasi quoddam purgatorium cum tolleratur ut oportet. videlicet patienter et libenter cum gratiarū actione. quia no solum gratiarū actio opus est in hijs que sunt ad consolationē sed etiam que sunt ad afflictionē. quia ut gregorius ait. Misericorditer deus tunc ad hoc adhibet seueritatē ne eternam inferat ultionē. Et aug⁹. Dne hic ure et seca ut michi parcas. Nulle ergo tribulationes te perturbent quia xpm nolle te relinquere cognouit iuxta illud aug⁹. Mala que nos hic pcutiūt ad deū nos ire compellunt. Non igitur anime salus approbatur uicarie beneplacitis sed potius eterna damnatio iuxta illud aug⁹. Signū manifeste damnationis est beneplacita alicui et a mundo diligi. Et uerū uirū est q̄ omnibus eternū dāpnandis omnes lapides nō simul consolatū. sed magis mirū est q̄ omnibus eternū salūandis omnes lapides nō simul in periculū repelle ergo a te impatiam tēptū pestē uirulentā et assume patiam scutū fortissimū quo omnes iniuste animē facliter superabis et respice xpm patientissimū et omnes sanctos usq; ad mortem.

Nolis cum infirmus sentis te temptari p impatiam quidem pute q̄ uocata ē impatia. quia ipm inquietando et perturbando a deo querit quia dns dicit. Sup quē requiescet spūs meus nisi sup quietū et humilē corde. Secundo q̄dam q̄ patia ē solliate seruanda. primo quia ē uera. Unde paulus. Patia est vobis necta. Et dns. Nonne oportuit pati xpm et ita intrare in gloriam suā. Et gregorius. Nūq̄ seruari concordia nisi p patiam valet. Secundo quia ē utilis. Unde dns in patia vra possidebitis animas vras. Et gregorius. Meliores meriti est aduersa tollerare q̄ bonis opibus inundare. Idem. Siue ferro martires esse possumus siue patientiam i animo ueraciter seruamus. Et salomon. Melior est patiens viro forti et qui dominatur animo suo expugnatore urbium.

Gloria
Ego in me in hac

Tentacio dyaboli de vana gloria

Quarto dyabolus tentat hominem infirmum p̄ simplicis complacencian̄ que est superbia spiritualis p̄ quā deuotis et religiosis atq; p̄fectis magis est infestus Cum eū homine ad desperationem aut ad impacienciā non potest inducere tunc aggreditur cum p̄ sui ipius complacenciā tales tentat iactulans cogitationes. O q̄ firmus es in fide q̄ fortis in spe et q̄ constanter pacies in tua infirmitate quam multa bona operatus es maxime gloriari debes quia non es sicut ceteri qui multa mala perpetrauerunt et tamen solo gemitu ad celestia regna peruenerunt ideoq; regnū celorum tibi iure negari non potest quia legitime certasti. Accipe ergo coronā tibi paratam et sedem excellenciorem p̄ ceteris optinebis per ista et similia dyabolus instantissime laborat hominem inducere ad spiritualem superbiam siue ad sui ipius complacenciam.

Pro quo notandum q̄ ista superbia multū est vitanda primo quia per eam homo efficitur similis dyabolo nam per solam superbiam de angelo factus est dyabolus. Secundo quia per ipsam homo videtur committere blasphemiam per hoc q̄ bonum q̄d a deo habet a se presumit habere. Tertio quia tanta posset esse sua complacencia q̄ per hanc dampnaretur. Unde gregorius Deminuit deo quis bonum q̄d gessit dum se apud se erigit. apud auctorem humilitatis cadit. Et augustinus. Homo iste iustificauerit et de iustitia sua presumpserit cadit.

Sic gloria ...
quid superbis ...
Vana sunt ...

Bona inspiracio angli contra vanā gloriā

Contra quartā tēptationē dyaboli dat angelus bonā inspirationē dicens. Miser cur tu superbis assc̄ribendi tibi ꝑ constantiā in fide spe et paciencia quę tu soli deo assc̄ribenda est cum michil boni ate habeas dño dicente. Sine me michil potestis facere Et alibi scriptū est Non tibi arrogo nō te iactes non te insolenter extollas michil de te ꝑsumas michil bonū tibi tribuas. Et dñs ait qui se exaltat hūmiliabitur. Et iterum. Nisi efficiamini sicut ꝑuuli iste nō intrabitis in regnū celorum. Humilia ergo te et exaltaberis dicente dño Qui se hūmiliat exaltabitur. Et aug⁹ Sic te hūmilias deus descendit ad te, si te exaltas deus recedet ate. Aute ergo mentē tuā a superbia quę lucifer quondā angloꝝ pulcherrimū fecit dyaboloꝝ deformissimū et de alta celorum proiecit ad infernū profundā quę etiam fuit causa omniū peccatoꝝ Unde bernardus Inicio omnis peccati et causa totius ꝑditionis est superbia. Idem. Tolle hoc vicium et sine labore omnia vicia resecantur.

Unde singulariter notandum q⁹ quicūq; moriturus sentit se temptari per superbiā debet primo cogitare q⁹ superbia tantū deo displicuit q⁹ sola ipsum occasione nobilissimam creaturarum lucifer cum omnibus sibi adherentibus de celis relegauit in eternū damnando. Et sic ex tali consideracione se hūmiliat atq; deprimat sua recognoscendo peccata quia ignorat an odio vel amore dignus sit. Unde debet precipue capere exemplū a sancto authonio cū dyabolus dixit O authoni tu me vicisti cui cū volo te exaltare tu deprimis cū te volo deprimere tu te erigis Secdo debet cogitare q⁹ hūilitas tā deo placuit q⁹ ꝑcipue ipsum occasione gloriosa virgo maria dei concepit et sup choros angeloꝝ exaltata est.

Vendar amor
Iurem reddam

Tentacio dyaboli de auaricia

Quinta tentacio dyaboli est auaricia magis
seculares et carnales infirmus que est nimia
occupacio temporalium atque exteriorum circa uxores et
amicos carnales seu corporales diuicias atque alia q̄
magis in uita sua dilexerunt per quē dyabolus
hominem maxime uexat in fine dierus. O miser
tu iam relinquies omnia temporalia que sollicitudi-
bus et laboribus maximis simul congregata cum
uxorem proles consanguineos amicos carissimos
et omnia alia huius mundi desiderabilia quorum
te societati adhuc interesse tibi magnum dolor sola-
cium ipis quoq; magnū bonū oratio. Iher et simu-
lia dyabolus hominū in extremis de auaricia presen-
tet. ut sic per amorem et cupiditatem terrenorū
quertati amore dei et propria salute. Unde singu-
lariter notandum q; maxime caueri debet ne cum
q; moriente simul corporales uxor liberi diuicie et
alia temporalia ad memoriam reducantur nisi in
quibus illud inseruit spiritualis salutis postulet
aut requirat quia alias maxime periculosum esset.
tū sic ab his que spūs et salutis sunt quibus maxime
tunc omnibus uiribus interioribus et exterioribus in-
tendendū est reuocarentur ad ista miseria temporalia
et carnalia tunc cum maxima sollicitudine a memo-
ria et mente remouenda in quibus certe tunc occupa-
ri est valde periculosum

Ne murmuraueris
Nouissimus autem
Quid facium

Bona inspiratio angeli contra malignā

Contra quā tēptationē dyaboli dat angelꝰ bonā inspirationē dicens. O homo aūte aures tuas a mendaciis suggestionibus dyaboli quibus te irritare et infice conatur. Et omnia tempestua totaliter post pone quoꝝ nullo modo aliquid salutis conferre potest. Sed magnū mihi ꝑmanebit tuū memor vbiq; dñi ad eos qui illis adhererūt. Nihilq; remanebit inter omnibus q̄ possidet nō poterit meus esse discipulus. Et ite rū Si quis venit ad me et nō odit ꝓpriū suū et matrem et vxorē et filios et fres et sorores adhuc nō potest meus esse discipulus. Itē ad eos qui illis renūciare dicit. Et omnis qui reliquerit domū vel fres vel sorores aut ꝓprium aut matrem aut vxorē aut filios aut agros ꝓpter nomē meū centuplū accipiet et vitā eternā possidebit. Memento etiam pauperis xpi in cruce ꝓpendentis. matrem dilectissimā et discipulos carissimos ꝓpter tuā salutē spontissime relinquentis. Considera eciā q; tot vnā sanctā illis contraria tentā seruū sū audituri illud. Venite benedicti ꝑris mei possidete regnū ꝑatū vobis ab origine mūdi. Surgue ergo ista tue menti et omnia tibi tentatoria tuū veneni a te penitus repellendo cor tuū ad voluntariā paupta tē itegre admitte. et sic regnū celoꝝ ex promisso tibi debetur dicente dño. Beati pauperes spiritu quī ipsoꝝ est regnū celoꝝ. teꝝ totū deo q̄ tibi diuinos gustari et scripturas plenarie quante totā tuā fiducia in eū finaliter. Nō qū inferiores seruis se tempter ꝑ auaritiā seu amorē terrenoꝝ. considerādi primo q; amor terrenoꝝ a deo separati quia dr amorē seclusus teste gregorio qui ait. Tanto quis a supno amore diuīgitur q̄to hic vilibus īmundis delectatur secundo g̃ videat q; voluntaria paupta hominē beatificat et ad eternū ducit dicente dño. Beati pauperes spiritu quī ipsoꝝ est regnū celoꝝ

VI.

Magonizans loqui et vltim vob habere potuerit fundat oc-
ues deu puo inocando ut ipm p ictabile uiam sua et
uirtut passionis sue susceperit dignetur. Secundo diligenter
inocet gloriosam virgine mariam pro sua mediatrice
Deinde omnes angelos et papie angelum pro sua cu-
todia deputatu. Deinde apostolos martires confessores
atq; virgines specialius tamen illos quos vel quas
prius sanus in veneratione habuit et dilexit quoru ymа-
gines cum ymagine crucifixi et beate marie virginis
ei presententur. Item dicat ter ultim versum. Dirupisti
domine vincula mea tibi sacrificabo hostiam laudis.
Nam ut versus secundu cassiodoru tanto creditur esse
uirtutis ut pena homi dimittatur si i fine vera confessione
dicatur. Item dicat ter hec uba vel similia que in sima beato
augustino asscribit. Pax dn nri ihu xpi et uis passionis
ei? et signu sce crucis et integritas bntissime vginis marie et
bnductio oiu scoz ac scaz custodia angelo? uenio suffragia
oiu electoz sint iter me et oos inimicos meos visibiles et i-
visibiles i hac hora mortis mee nunc et vltimo dicat. In manus
tuas comendo spm meu. Si autem iterum? no sciat ozones dicere
dicat aliquis de astantib? alta voce coram eo ozones vel hystorias
deuotas i quib? prius sanus delectabatur. Ipe vero ozet corde et de
siderio ut scit et potest. Unde nota et quo tota salus hois i fine
consistat solicite curare debet unusquisq; ut sibi de socio vel ami-
co deuoto fideli et ydoneo prouideat q ei iexterius fideliter as-
sistat ad fidei constantia patientia deuotione confidentia et
perseuerantia ipm iterando animando ac magnam ozones
deuotas pro eo fideliter dicendo. Sed heu pauci sunt qui in
morte proximis suis fideliter assistut interrogando monendo
et pro ipis ozando. pserti cu ipi morientes nondum mor-
tem sentiut et anime morientem sepe miserabiliter pcidentem

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The Master E. S. and the 'Ars moriendi'